M1532

Mss 2
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Series 4
Vol. 1

Joseph Rotch
& Love Macy

Benjamin Rotch
& Martha

Wm Rotch, Francis, Joseph T.
& Elizth Barney. & Nancy. single

Elizabeth -- William -- Benjamin --- Lydia ---- Thomas ---- Mary
Saml Rodman. Elizth Rodman - Eliza Baker. Wm Dean. Charity Rodman. single

Gertrude Weld Parkinson
Boston
Mass.

Mss 2 S-g 1 Series 4

Copy of—

An
Autobiographical Memoir
of
William Rotch

written in the Eightieth year
of his age

"The annals of private men I have often thought as instructive and worthy of being recorded as those of their superiors"

Alexander Carlyle. Chap XIV. p411

Memoranda

A friend of mine has repeatedly requested me to put on paper some of the occurrences of about twenty years of my life, from 1775 to 1794, which he had heard me relate in conversation.

When the Revolutionary War broke out in 1775; I saw clearly that the only line of conduct to be persued by us, the Inhabitants of the Island of Nantucket was to take no part in the contest and to endeavor to give no occasion of offence to either of the contending powers.

A great portion of the Inhabitants were of the denomination of Friends and a large number of the considerate of the other Societies united in the opinion that our safety was to be found in a state of Neutrality as far as it could be obtained

although we had no doubt that suffering would be our lot, and which we afterwards experienced from both parties

Our situation was rendered more difficult from having among us a few restless spirits who had nothing to lose and who were often thwarting our pacific plan and subjecting us to dangers not caring what confusion they brought upon us, if they could gain something in the scramble.

My own troubles began soon after the war broke out.

In the 1764 I had taken the goods of a merchant in Boston, deceased and insolvent who was deeply indebted to me. Among these were a number of muskets some with, others without bayonets. The Straits of Bellisle opened a new field for the Whale fishery. There

wild fowl were abundant and my muskets met with a ready sale, but whenever guns with bayonets were chosen I invariably took that instrument of war from them. The purchaser would insist on having it, but I as strenuously resisted and I laid them all by.

Many years afterward I removed to another store, leaving much rubbish in the one I had left amongst the rubbish were those bayonets, neglected and forgotten until the war commenced, when to my surprise they were brought into view by an application made for them by a person from the Continent.

The time had now come to support our testimony against war, or forever abandon it, as this very instrument was a severe test. I would not hesitate and therefore promptly denied the

applicant. My reasons for not furnishing the bayonets was demanded to which I readily answered "As this instrument is purposely made and used for the destruction of mankind & I cannot put into one man's hand to distroy another, that which I cannot use myself in the same way, I refuse to comply with thy demand". The person left me much dissatisfied. Others came and received the same denial. It made a great noise in the country and my life was threatened. I would gladly have beaten them into "pruning hooks", as it was, I took an early opportunity of throwing them into the Sea.

A short time after I was called before a Committe appointed by the Court then held at Watertown near Boston and questioned, amongst other thing, respecting

these bayonets. I gave a full account of my proceedings and closed it with saying. "I sank them in the bottom of the sea. I did it from principle. I have ever been glad that I had done it. If I have done wrong I am to be pitied"

The Chairman of the Committe one Major Hawley (a worthy character) then addressed the Committe and said - "I believe Mr Rotch has given us a candid account of the affair and every man has a right to act consistently with his religious principles, but I am sorry we can not have the bayonets for we want them very much"

The Major was desirous of knowing more of our Friends principles, on which I informed him as far as he enquired, one of the Committe* in a pert manner observed "Then your princepals are passive obedience and non resistence". I replied "No my

* Judge Paine

friend, our principals are Active obedience or passive suffering." I passed through no small trial on account of my bayonets, and the clamor long continued against me

From the year 1775 to the end of the War, we were in continual embarrassments. Our vessels were captured by the English and our small vessels and boats sent to the Continent for provisions, denied and sent back empty under pretence that we supplied the British which was without the least foundation.

Prohibitory laws were often made in consequence of these reports unfounded as they were. By this inhuman conduct we were sometimes in danger of being starved. One of these laws was founded on an information from Governor Trumbull of Connecticut, who had been imposed upon respecting our conduct in supplying the British. I wrote to the Governor

on the subject and laid our distress very home to him at the same time that I assured him that nothing of that kind had taken place. He was convinced of his error and was ever after very kind in assisting us within his jurisdiction. But there were so many petty officers as Committees of safety inspection &c in all parts, and too many of them chosen much upon the principals of Jereboam's Priests*, that we were sorely tried and afflicted.

It was about the year 1778, when the current was very strong against us in Nantucket. The vessels we sent after provisions were sent back empty and great suffering for want of food was likely to take place, that the people (not Friends) who thought we ought to have joined in the war began to chide and murmur against me. They considered me the principal cause that we did not join in the war (which I knew was

*"And he made an house of high places, and made priests of the lowest of the people, which were not of the sons of Levi" I Kings, XIII-31

measurably the case) when we might have been plentifully supplied, but now were likely to starve; little considering that, if we had taken part, there was nothing but supernatural aid (which we had no reason to expect) that could have prevented our destruction

Though I had done everything in my power for our preservation, this murmuring of the people operated so severely upon my spirits that I was once (a time never to be forgotten) on the point of asking that Divine being who gave me life, that he would take it from me, for my affliction seemed more than I could bear; but, sustained by that good hand, which had so often been my deliverer, after shedding a flood of tears my mind was more easy and my spirits revived.

In the year 1779* Seven armed vessels and transports with troops from Newport came to us the latter commanded by George Leonard, an

* See note B

American as were the troops in general, having joined the English. They plundered us of much property, some from me, and a considerable amount from one Thomas Jenkins. While they were plundering his store I attempted to pass the guard they had set, being desirous to see Leonard and intercede with him to desist, but the guard arrested my progress with the bayonet. After some time Timothy Folger succeded in speaking to him and advised him to go off as the people would not bear it much longer. He took the hint and retired much enraged.

We soon had information that Leonard and Co. were preparing a much more formidable expedition against us. The town was convened to consult what measures should be taken in this trying emergency, which resulted in sending Dr. Benjamin Tupper, Saml Starbuck

and myself to Newport and thence if necessary to New York to represent our case to the Commanders of the army and navy.

We arrived in the harbour of Newport, where Capt. Dawson commanded the Navy and General Prescott the Army but, the Refugees had made interest with the General not to permit us to land and we were ordered to depart by Capt. Dawson. We interceded with him to let us stay a little longer for we found the expedition was progressing rapidly and unless we could arrest it, it would be in vain to proceed to New York.

Again Dawson by request of Gen. Prescott under the influence of the Refugees ordered us immediately to depart. Dr Tupper now for the first time went on board and in his plain, blunt way, after the

usual ceremony of entry, addressed him in this way. "You order us to depart, We cannot be frightened away nor will we depart. We know the extent of your authority. You may make a prize of our vessel and imprison us. Much better for us to be thus treated than to be sent away. We come for peace and you ought to encourage every thing of the kind, &c &c". His reasons made such an impression on Capt. Dawson that he gave us leave to remain as long as we pleased. The Refugee boat came several times to us to endeavour to get us off. We insisted on going on shore, but this they steadily refused. After this conversation with Capt. Dawson this this boat came again and Dr. Tupper insisted that he would go on shore. They still denied him unless he would

stay with them. As he was not always exact in his expressions, to answer his purpose he said "Well I am going to stay" and almost forcibly got into their boat and went ashore, being satisfied, if he could see the General, he could in this respect destroy the influence of the Refugees. He did accordingly get leave for Saml Starbuck, and the next day for me to come on shore.

We found it necessary to be in friendship with the Refugees that if possible we might stop the currant of this intended predatory visit.

I got on shore in the afternoon and found that I must wait on General Prescott. Knowing his brittle temper and it being in the afternoon, I almost dreaded to appear in his presence. However let my treatment be what it

would. I desired the meeting over and accordingly went

I was introduced by on of his aids. He received me very cordially gave me his hand and said "Mr Rotch will you have some dinner? I can give you good bread tho the Rebels say we have none". I thanked him, saying I had dined, "Well, said he, will you have a glass of wine"? I answered "I have no objection if thou canst put up with my plain way." My glass was filled with his own and those of all the Officers at the table. As a stranger introduced they all drank to me before I put the glass to my lips. I then observed, "General as I mentioned before, if thou couldst put up with my plain way. I was willing to take wine with thee, but as we as a Society disuse these ceremonies & I have always found its best to keep

to my profession let me be in what company I may, therefore, I hope my not making a like return will not be accepted as a mark of disrespect for I assure thee it is not the case." His answer was "Oh no! If a Quaker will but be a Quaker it is all I want of him, but. — he is no Quaker" (naming one of our professio and I was sorry for the cause of this remark.

After some conversation I mentioned that I did not wish to intrude further on his time and rose to retire "Oh no" says he "You must take some Coffee." I accordingly stopped. He was full of conversation respecting the siege of the Americans and made it a very trifling thing. I then mentioned (the French fleet being at that time before the town) that twelve capital ships being so near was much against

them "To be sure" said he, "it is not very pleasant, but we don't mind them". I then gladly retired.

We applied to Major Winslow formerly of Plymouth to introduce us to Colonel Fanning the principal. When we stated our situation, that we were likely to be destroyed the Colonel was very high, saying we might join the English then. I observed that such a step would inevitably lead to our destruction. "Well," said he, "Have not I been destroyed also?" I believe he was Govenor of North Carolina at the begining of the War.

Major Winslow endeavored to soften him by representing our peculiar situation but there seemed little prospect of anything favorable when we parted.

They had a Board of Refugees established, of which Colonel Fanning was

President, who would hear us when they met. We accordingly attended and found Fanning very mild and disposed to alleviate our sufferings.

As we proposed applying to the Commander in Chief at New York, we asked if they would put off their expedition until they could know the result of our mission. Fanning thought this reasonable and put the question to all the principals there. They all readily agreed until it came to —— who very reluctantly gave his consent.

We then proceeded to New York and applied to the Commanders, Commodore Sir George Collier of the Navy, and Sir Henry Clinton of the Army.

On representing our case to Sir George Collier he readily gave us an order forbidding any British armed vessel to

take anything out of our harbour. This was a great relief. I then laid before him the state of our captured seamen, that all the exchanges of prisoners were partial that as we made no prisoners we had none to exchange, consequently ours remained in the Prison ships until they mostly died. On his understanding the reasonableness of our request he ordered that all our men should be released who were not taken in armed vessels (for such we had no right to apply) and that it should not be so in future as long as he held the command.

We also applied to Sir Henry Clinton through one of his Aids (Major Andrie that fine young man who lost his life as a Spy) We could get no written order from him, but he intimated that he would direct that those in his depart-

ment should not molest us, which he no doubt did as they gave up their expedition and we had a little quiet until Sir George Collier's command expired and he was superceded by the arrival of Admiral Arbuthnot and the shaving mills then came upon us.

Timothy Folger was then sent to New York and he obtained a like order to that obtained from Sir George. Added to this he got permits for a few vessels (about fifteen) to whale on our coast, which were successful, but it was with great difficulty that distinction could be made between English and American cruizers as the latter would make prize of us if British permits were found—

I now come to the most trying scenes in my whole experience during the war. I was with four others impeached

for High Treason by Thomas Jenkins when there was no step between being clear and death.

The laws of this State at that time made it High Treason for any person to go to a British port without the consent of the Court

We had been well assured that if we applied we should be refused, and if we did not apply to the British we must from every appearance be destroyed by them. Under serious consideration I was willing to be joined to the two others and as before stated proceeded as with our lives in our hands. This was made one of the great charges in the Impeachment a copy of which I shall annex.

We were examined before a Committee of the Court on the Impeachment, but knowing we were to appear again when

the witnesses should attend we made no defence; which we afterwards found was an error in judgment.

By this means the Court thought us guilty and were about to make an order to the Grand Jury to find a bill against and to commit us to prison, which, if it had taken place would have been in the severe winter of 1780.

Happily my much valued friend Walter Spooner Esquire a member of the Court just then arrived, perceived the business before the Court and came to me for information. We told him we had reserved our defence for the second examination. He said we were in error and must send for Jenkins, who resided in Lynn, and have another examination and he would get the Court to stay proceedings until this should be done. We

all therefore met before the Committee. General Ward (a worthy character) was in the Chair. It was put to me first to answer to the high charges. When I arose General Ward politely told me I need not rise. I thanked him but, my heart was so full that my tongue seemed incapable of utterance while sitting.

I answered the charges in such a manner as fully to convince the Committee of our innocence. When I had finished, the Chairman, doubtless from a desire to put our minds at ease, asked me when we expected to return home. I replied that he could better judge of that than I could, being as I was, in Custody. He then asked me if I would take the subpoenas for the witnesses to Nantucket and deliver them to the

Sheriff. This was also to console our minds. I answered in the affermiative if he thought proper to entrust me with them. I afterward took and delivered them.

In the Spring following, then we again appeared before the Court with twelve out of twenty of the witnesses, being all I could get together to attend, and then had another full examination.

Before we entered upon it I desired liberty to ask Jenkins a question which was granted. Some of his friends had propagated a report that I had offered him money to withdraw his complaint. I then put the question, whether I had ever made him an offer of the kind, but it irritated him and I therefore went no further in a question to him, but desired liberty to make my declaration before we

entered upon the charges in the complaint, which was readily granted.

I then said, "I now declare, in the most solemn manner, that I have never directly nor indirectly, by myself or by any other person for me offered one farthing to Thomas Jenkins to withdraw or in any way mitigate the charges in his complaint now exhibited".

I looked over the charges and made my defence article by article and when I had gone through the whole, I observed to the Committee that if I had not answered fully to their satisfaction, if they would put any question which they thought would throw more light upon the subject I would answer it without the least equivocation or mental reservation.

The Chairman General Ward made me a low bow; no question was asked.

They then took the complaint and examined the witnesses, one by one, on each charge. "What do you know of this Mr — (such a one)?" reading the charge "Nothing" and so to the next and throughout the whole charges "Nothing" was the answer except from Marshall Jenkins. He began to tell what the Refugees told him at the Vineyard when they returned from Nantucket but General Ward stopped him and asked, "Were you at Nantucket?" He answered "No". "Then you can give no evidence".

One charge against me was "corresponding with the enemy". This correspondence was a letter given to Ebenezer Coffin addressed to General Prescott requesting the release of his son and assuring him that he had not been in an armed vessel. This same Ebenezer Coffin acquainted his brother Alexander that I had given the letter, who

used his utmost against one.

This Committee was composed of the two branches, of the House & Senate, who reported to their several departments. The House then took the vote and cleared us fully except one single vote, but the Senate in their vote held us. A Committee of conference was appointed. They met and reported. Each branch adhered to its former vote. Thus we were discharged by the House & held by the Senate, but we were not detained and so it remained, until we were set at liberty by the Peace.

In the complaint I was charged with being the means of preventing a brig which had much of Jenkins's property on board from being retaken. I suppose such was the case by reasoning with the owners then present. The seven armed vessels had gone over the bar and anchored, waiting for the

flowing of the tide to take the Brig out. It was suggested by some hot headed men that they could retake her. I admitted it but asked the owners if it would be an even stake, observing - "they have now got what they will take at this time and if this vessel is stopped it will bring the seven armed vessels into the harbour again and no doubt the destruction of the town will be the consequence." (For there was no effective force to prevent it) "If you (the owners) will let her go I am willing to contribute to the loss of the vessel and goods on board in the same proportion that I should pay in a tax of equal amount."

A great number of people were present who generally united in the proposal. The owners let her go and I contributed seven hundred and twenty dollars toward the loss of the property which was more than double my

proportion of a like tax.

When this circumstance was known while we were in Boston it raised a great indignation against Jenkins that such a charge should be in the charges when I had made double compensation to what I ought. In a conversation with him at the time of our examination, (several others being present) I understood him that I ought to make some concession. My answer was "If turning my hand over in the way of concession would withdraw the complaint I would not do it. If my innocence will not protect me and my life should be taken, my blood will be required at thy hands." This shocked him but it did not last long, as when he told some of his friends that he believed Samuel Starbuck and myself were clear and they asked

him why he did not take our names out of the complaint, He replied "Because it suits me best to keep them in." So callous a heart I hope is not often to be met with, thus playing with our lives as with a tennis ball. I am glad to leave this tragic scene and proceed.

Some time in the year 1780 Admiral Arbuthnot returned to England and Admiral Digby succeeded him.

As soon as Arbuthnot was gone those plundering Refugees were upon us again, our protection having ceased by his departure.

This renewed our perplexity. The town was convened to consult about measures to prevent destruction. The result was to send a Committee to New York to solicit an order from Admiral Digby similar to that we had before. It was proposed to me to go with two others. I had then been confined

nearly nine months with the Rheumatism
had just left my crutches and was
hobbling about with a cane, therefore
I could not think of such an undertaking,
but all others utterly refused to go unless
I would accompany them. This brought
a great straight upon my mind. To go
I thought I could not and to omit it
seemed almost inevitable destruction.
At last I consented under great appre-
hension that I should not live to return

We accordingly set sail and when
we were off Rhode Island I was obliged
to have them go to the East side of the
Island and lay there several days for
my pain was so great that I could
not bear the motion of the vessel but
we got safely to New York in a few days
after it abated.

Admiral Digby had arrived, Commodore

Affleck (since Admiral) still being there and he having kindly assisted in procuring the permits for a few whaling vessels the year before, we first applied to him. We asked him to introduce us to the Admiral and assist us in procuring protection against these Cruisers in our harbour and some permits for the Fishery. He looked very stern and said. "I don't know how you can have the face to ask any indulgence of us. I assisted you in getting permits last year for which I have been sorry. I find you have abused the confidence we placed in you, for Captain ——— who cruised in Boston bay and its vicinity told me he could hardly find a vessel but what had the permits and you deserve no favor &c &c". I heard him patiently through while he was giving us such a lecture, knowing I could over-

throw it all. I then answered "Commodore Affleck you have been grossly imposed upon in this matter. I defy Captain — to make such a declaration to my face. those permits were put into my hands. I delivered them taking receipt for each to be returned to me at the end of the voyage and an obligation that no transfer should be made or copies given. I received back all the permits, except two, before I left home and should probably have received those two on the day I sailed. Now if any such duplicity has been practised I am the person who is accountable and I am now here to take the punishment such ~~as~~ perfidy deserves". He immediately became placid and said. "You deserve favor." "I am now going to the Admiral. Do you go there in an hour". We attended punctually.

He introduced us to the Admiral and informed him that his predecessor Admiral Arbuthnot granted the people of Nantucket a few permits for the Fishery last year, adding "I can assure your Excellency they have made no bad use of them". Thus after a storm came a pleasant calm.

We obtained an order as heretofore respecting the property in our harbour and twenty four permits for the Fishery and I returned home much improved in my health.

It was necessary to secrete these documents from American Cruisers but such was the difficulty of distinguishing them that two were presented to American armed vessels who immediately took the vessels as prizes. This occasioned us to persue other means for the security of these small priveleges though very useful to us, which I shall

mention hereafter.

We were now brought into the most imminent danger which no human effort could check much less prevent. Nothing short of the interposition of Divine Providence preserved us from apparent ruin. Several Sloops of war and a number of transports intended paying us a distructive visit. They were in sight of us in the day time three days near Cape Poag (Martha's Vineyard). They got under way the mornings successively and stood for the Island with a fair wind which each morning came round against them and the tide too came round against them which obliged them to their anchorage still in view of us. Before they could make the fourth attempt orders came for their return to New York for some other expedition. Thus we were

mercifully relieved for that time after more fearful apprehension than any we had befor witnessed. Messengers were arriving one after another and twice I was called up in the night with the disagreeable information that they were at hand.

A solemn time indeed it was and can never be obliterated from my memory while life and reason are vouchsafed.

I was with two men and two women friends captured in going to our Quarterly meeting at Sandwich by a British privateer from New York. They had just before taken a Cedar boat and ordered us to depart in it immediately having just plundered us of what money we possesed but they took neither baggage nor provisions from us. The vessel was mine and I pleaded earn

estly for her and sometimes nearly obtained a majority to give her to us, but another can of grog would be stirred up by those who would not consent to release her and this never failed to gain several to their side. They repeatedly ordered us to be gone but we refused, still pleading for our vessel, until the Captain called to the prize master to know why he did not send us away. He replied, "They will not go." He then sent a furious fellow to drive us away. Samuel Starbuck and I were standing together. He approached us with an uplifed cutlass and a violent countenance saying, "Begone into the boat or I'll cut your heads off." I looked him earnestly in the face, eye to eye, and with a pretty stern accent said, "I am not afraid of thy cutting my head off. We are prisoners. Treat us as such

but do not talk of cutting our heads off".
He dropped his arm and seemed struck at
my boldness. There were now two vessels
coming rapidly in pursuit and we thought
it time to be off. They soon retook our vessel
and pursued the privateer and took her
but her men left her in their boat and
got on shore on the Vineyard. They hunted
them and took all except that one who
talked of cutting our heads off. He made
his escape. Our vessel being taken I re-
covered her by paying salvage, as did a
young man most of his money who had
$200. taken from him.

I now return to the permits granted by
Admiral Digby. The American cruisers
generally had knowledge of our whaling
vessels having them, therefore every deception
and disguise was resorted to, to entrap them.
They were successful in drawing the permits

from two taking them as prizes. It was now evident that we could proceed no further without having Permits from both contending powers. Accordingly the Town was convened and Samuel Starbuck and myself were sent to Congress to represent our distressed condition and endeavor to procure their permission as well as that of the British for a few vessels.

We set off in mid winter and arrived in Philadelphia when Congress was sitting. We opened our business first to General Lincoln, Samuel Osgood, Nathaniel Gorham, & Thomas Fitzsimmons, The first Minister of War, the others were members of Congress the last a great Commercial man. To them we opened our business. We drew up a memorial but did not present it until we had an opportunity of stating our case to the most influential members. Among them was

President Madison who as well as the others treated us with great civility and appeared to take an interest in our sufferings. We went to one of the Massachusetts members who resided in Boston. He was greatly prejudiced against us. I fell in with him alone and conversed about two hours with him endeavouring to impress him with our situation and the necessity of our having the aid of Congress, but apparently without effect. At last I asked him these questions. "Is the whale fishery worth preserving to this country?" "Yes". "Can it be preserved in the present state of things in any place except Nantucket?" "No." "Can we pursue it unless you and the British will both give us permits?" "No". Then where is the difficulty?". Thus we parted.

We reported this conversation to our before mentioned friends.

We had now drawn our memorial and desired them to look over it. They approved it and advised us to get the same person to present it. Accordingly we repaired to his apartments, requested him to examine it and give us his judgment whether our statements appeared correct. He approved it. We then requested him if agreeable to him to present it to Congress. He accepted and presented it accordingly. It was deliberated upon and a disposition appeared in Congress to give their aid to its accomplishment. They actually granted to us Thirty five permits for the Whale Fishery. They were delivered to us and the next day a vessel arrived from Europe bringing a rumor of a Provisional treaty of Peace having been signed by our ministers and the British government, to take place when the Peace between England and France should

be concluded and it was not long before the Official account of it reached Philadelphia. This ended this distructive war, with the seperation of the United States from Great Britian.

Our arduous labors after five or six weeks detention were now terminated and might have been spared if we had apprehended that Peace had been so near. The British were stile to hold New York for a limited time. I obtained permission to visit that City for the accomplishment of some business and then returned home.

The happy return of Peace was now enjoyed in the United States but poor Nantucket; whose distresses did not end with the war, though rejoiced at the event, still seemed doomed for a time to ruin.

Separated from Great Britian, the only market of consequence for Sperm Oil, we

were brought under the Alien duty of £18 Stg. pr. ton, a duty laid upon Aliens to encourage British subjects. Such we then were and this duty had its full effect upon us. Sperm Oil was sold at Nantucket after the Peace for £17 Sterling pr. ton, which before we were separated was worth £30 Stg.

£25 Stg. was necessary to cover expenses and leave a very moderate profit to the owners. Thus a loss of nearly £8 Stg pr ton attended the business. We continued it for years at a certain loss, in hopes that some favorable turn might take place, but no prospect appearing and the loss I had sustained by the Revolutionary War (about £60.000) had so reduced my property that I found it necessary to seek some new expedients to prevent the loss of all. I found no probable alternative but to proceed to England and endeavour to pursue the fishery from there.

I accordingly took passage in my Ship Maria* accompanied by my son Benjamin and sailed from Nantucket on the 4th of 7th month 1785. We had a fine passage of twenty three days in five of which having Easterly winds we only made one days sail forward.

I proceeded to London calling on my old friend Dr William Cooper at Rochester who with his family proceeded to England in this same Ship two years before, and requested him to accompany me to London which he kindly did. When we reached Shorter's Hill in full view of London and Eight miles distant, forcibly feeling the great distance which separated me from my family, myself a stranger in that land, the occasion that drew me there and the uncertainty of its answering any valuable purpose; I was overwhelmed with sorrow and my spirits so depressed that in looking towards that great city, no pleasant pictures

*Built for a Privateer 1782. Now owned by Thos R. Rodman & at sea. W. S. R. 1861 See note.

were presented to my view. But I found it would not do to give way to despondence. Reason resumed her sway, I was there and something must be attempted.

We reached London and I took lodgings for myself and my son Benjamin at Thomas Wagstaff's in Gracechurch Street.

Our first journey was to the West of England in which we had the valuable company of my friend James Phillips.

We visited the coast from Southampton to Falmouth in search of a good place for the Whale Fishery if we should conclude to form an establishment in the Island.

We found several ports suitable to the purpose but none that we preferred to Falmouth. In that large harbour there are several smaller that would do well for the business. I had very favourable offers of divers places but I was only on a dis-

covery and did not wish to entangle myself.

After viewing the coast and spending some days in Plymouth we took a circuitous route and returned to London. At Bristol I visited the grave of my brother Joseph who died there eighteen years before*.

My next object was to know what encouragement we could obtain from the British government.

My friend Robert Barclay perceiving what my business was, spoke to Harry Beaufoy a member of Parliament who introduced me to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the great Wm Pitt then about twenty seven years of age. He received me politely and heard me patiently. I laid before him our ruinous situation saying "When the war commenced we declared against taking any part in it and strenuously adhered to this determination thus placing ourselves as a

* See Phillis Wheatleys poem. page

Neutral Island. Nevertheless, you have taken from us about two hundred sail of vessels valued at £200,000 Sterling unjustly and illegally. Had the War been founded on a general declaration against America, we should have been included, but it was predicated on a Rebellion; consequently none could have been included in it but such as were in arms or those that were aiding such. We have done neither. As a proof of our being without the reach of your declaration, You sent Commissioners to restore peace to America in which any Province, County or Town that should make submission and receive pardon should be reinstated in its former situation. As we had not offended we had no submission to make or pardon to ask, and certainly it is very hard if we do not stand on better ground than those who have offended consequently we

remained a part of your dominions until separated by the Peace."

This last sentence I pressed very closely whenever I could with propriety introduce it, knowing it was a material point.

After I had done he paused for some time and then answered. "Undoubtedly you are right Sir. Now what can be done for you?" I told him that in the present situation of things, the principal part of our Inhabitants must leave the Island. Some would go into the Country. "A part," continued I, wish to continue the Whale Fishery where-ever it can be pursued to advantage. Therefore my chief business is to lay our distressed situation before this Nation and to ascertain if the Fishery is an object worth giving such encouragement for a removal to England, as the subject deserves." Thus our conversation ended and I withdrew with my friend Harry Beaufoy.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer could not be expected to attend to all applications but I presume he laid mine before the Privy Council as the Secretary of the Council Stephen Cotterel sent me a note soon after this conversation saying the Council would sit at an early day when they would hear what I had to say. I waited for that early day a month and then I waited on Secretary Cotterel to know what occasioned delay. His answer was, that so much business lay before the Council that they had not been able to attend to it, but would soon. Thus I waited, not daring to leave town lest I should be called for. This state of things continued more than four months during which I received several, what I called unmeaning Court messages, such as, "they were sorry they were not able to send for me" &c. &c.

I then desired them to appoint some person for me to confer with, that the matter might be brought to a close. This was done, but unhappily Lord Hawkesbury was the person. A greater enemy to America could not be found. I believe in that body nor hardly in the Nation, I waited on him and informed him what encouragement I thought would induce a removal which I estimated at £100 Sterling transportation for a family of five persons and £100 Sterling Settlement. Say £20.000 Stg for a hundred families. "Oh!" says he, "this is a great Sum, and at this time too, when we are endeavouring to economize our expenditures." I replied "Thou mayst think it a great sum for this nation to pay. I think two thirds of it a great sum for you to have taken from me as an individual unjustly and illegally. We had a long conversaton and I left him to call again in a few days, which

I did. I then added to my demand the liberty to bring Thirty American ships for the Fishery. "Oh no" said he "that cannot be, Our carpenters must be employed."

I mentioned we had some Ships that we possesed before the War. "Those can surely be admitted", "No they must be British built." — "Will it be any advantage if an emigration takes place, for the emigrants to bring property with them?" "Yes certainly" "If they can invest their money in articles that will be worth double here to what they are at home, will that be an additional advantage to this country?" "Yes". "Then why not bring Ships, when two of ours will not cost one of yours?" "Oh! we don't make mercantile calculations, 'tis seamen we want." "Then surely two of our vessels will answer your purpose better than one of yours, as they will make double the number of sea-

men, which is the thing aimed at." He saw that he was in a dilemma out of which he could not reason himself and struggled through with some violence. He had made his own nice calculation of £ 87-10 for transportation and settlement of a family and says he, "I am about a fishery bill and want to come at something I can insert." My answer was "Thou canst go on with thy fishery bill, thy offer is no object to me". I was then taking leave, and withdrawing - "Well Mr. Rotch you'll call on me again in two or three days". I see no necessity for it". "But I desire you would". "If thou desirest it, perhaps I may call". However he let me rest but one day before he sent for me again. He had the same story over again but I told him it was unnecessary to enter again upon the subject. I then informed him that I had heard a rumour that Nantucket

had agreed to furnish France with a quantity of Oil. He stepped to his bureau and took out a file of papers from which he pretended to read an entire contradiction of the report, though I was satisfied there was not a line there on the subject. I said that, "it was only a vague report that I heard and I cannot vouch for the truth of it, but we are like drowning men catching at every straw that passes by, therefore, I am determined to go to France and see what it is. If there is any such contract sufficient to retain us at Nantucket, neither you nor any other Nation can have us, and if it is insufficient I shall endevour to enlarge it." "Ah!" says he, "Quakers go to France?" I replied, "Yes- but with regret." I then parted from Lord Hawkesbury for the last time.

I immediately embarked with my son for Dunkirk where I drew up my proposals

and sent them to Paris, not wishing to proceed further until I found the disposition of the French Court. They sent for us to come immediately. We lost no time in answering the summons and proceeded at once to Paris. The Master of Requests who was the proper minister to receive our proposals and make his remarks on the several articles, had examined them and made his remarks accordingly. The propositions were.

"1st A full and free enjoyment of Religion according to the principals of the people called Quakers."

To which he annexed "Accordè".

2nd An entire exemption from Military requisitions of every kind.

To this he annexed the following just remark "As they are a peaceable people and meddle not with the quarrels of Princes neither internal

nor external this proposition may be granted".

The other propositions related to the regulation of the Whale Fishery.

We next proceeded to the several Ministers five in number, at Versailles. First to Calonne, Comptroller of Finance. We gave our reasons for not taking off our hats on introduction to them all. Calonne replied, "I care nothing for your hats if your hearts are right". Next we went to the aged Vergennes, Minister of Foreign Affairs, then to the Marshall De Castre, Minister of Marine. Then to the Prince of Rubec, Generalissimo of Flanders, At last to the Intendant of Flanders, who all agreed to my proposals. We then returned to Paris and were to visit Versailles again to take leave according to the etiquette of the Court. Before we set off one of the Ministers asked us if we did not wish

to visit the palace. We excused ourselves, as we did not think curiosity would justify us if our plain way would give offence. While we remained in Paris we received a note from the Minister saying, he had spoken to the King who gave full liberty to the "Nantucket Friends," (they avoided the name of Quaker when they found it was given in reproach) to visit the Palace both its public & private apartments when he was out, which happened almost every day. To view the private apartments was a great privelege, not often granted except to persons of note. But unfavourably for us the King did not happen to be out on the day we went to take our leave, which was a disappointment, but we went through the public apartments and into the Chapel.* When we hesitated at the latter, the Officer insisted on our entering in our own way, showing us every thing remark-

* Note D.

able and pointed out the places occupied by the Royal family in time of mass &c.

We now took leave and returned to London.

After I was gone to France Lord Hawkesbury became alarmed and inquired of Harry Beaufoy and asked if I had gone to France, He answered in the affirmative. "Why has he gone there?" "For what you or any other man would have gone. You would not make him an offer worthy his acceptance. He will now try what can be done in France". Alexander Champion wrote to me, I suppose at Lord Hawkesbury's request, to inform me that he had made provision for us in his Fishery bill and inserted liberty for us to bring in 40 ships, instead of 30, which I demanded, he having forgotten the number, but it was too late. This letter was brought to our

Apartments and we understood the bearer to inquire if a Dutch gentleman resided there. He was answered in the negative and my letter was lodged in a small letter office always an appendage to the large hotels. The very evening it was brought to me we left Paris.

We now returned to London and I was soon sent for by George Rose (I suppose the father of the minister lately sent to the United States,) who was one of Pitt's secretaries. He inquired if I had "contracted with France," I told him "No. I did not come to make any contract, propositions were the extents of my business." "You are then at liberty to agree with us and I am authorized by Mr Pitt to tell you that you may make your own terms." I told him it was too late. "I made very moderate proposals to you, but could not obtain anything worth my notice. I went to France,

sent forward my proposals which were doubly advantageous to what I offered your Government. They considered them a very short time and on my arrival in Paris were ready to act. I had separate interviews with all the Ministers of State necessary to the subject, who all agreed to and granted my demands." He still insisted that I was not bound to France and I should make my own terms with them but all in vain. The time had passed over. Lord Sheffield also sent for me on the same subject but was soon convinced that it was too late. The Minority came to me for materials to attack the Lord Hawkesbury but I refused to supply them.

I now began to prepare for returning home to my family. Accordingly I bought a good Ship and with Wm. Moores master we left the Downs the 11th of 10th mo. 1786. After

a tremendous passage of 68 days in which we had twelve heavy stormes, we arrived in Boston and by way of Providence and Newport I reached my own home the 1st of 1st month 1787. after an absence of Eighteen months and to my unspeakable comfort found my family all well.

We next prepared to increase our Fishery in Dunkirk and my son Benja returned there he having become a partner with my son in law Samuel Rodman and myself*

After remaining at home nearly four years I thought it best to make another voyage to assist my son Benjamin in our business at Dunkirk, and not expecting to return in less than three years, a term too long to be separated from my family I proposed to my wife to accompany me and take our daughters Lydia and Mary

* See Letters

with us, to which she consented, and we also took our son Benjamin's wife and child We sailed from New Bedford in the Ship Mary and Eliza, which I bought for the purpose, Abisha Haydon master, on the 29th of 7th month 1790. We arrived in Dunkirk in 38 days and found our son in health and greatly rejoiced to receive his wife and child, as well as to see us.

Early in 1791, I was called upon with my son to attend the National Assembly at Paris. We were joined by John Marsillac in presenting a petition to that body for some priveleges and exemptions connected with our religious principals. The petition was drawn up by John Marsillac before we reached Paris and notice given that it must be presented next day. On perusing it we found some material alterations necessary and in some instances it was

difficult to express in French the alterations we had made in English without losing their force. My not understanding the French language it was impossible to have such expressions as I thought necessary inserted, and the time was so short that we were obliged to let it pass with much fewer amendments than I wished.

The hour was come for presenting it and the previous notice given of the "Quaker petition" I suppose drew every member in town to his seat.

The galleries for spectators were filled and many could not be accommodated nor did we wonder at this curiosity considering the novelty of the subject.

We had been with Brissot, De Warville, Clavier and some others looking over the petition until the latest moment and must now proceed to the Assembly. They, with several

others, had come to accompany us and just as we were moving some one observed. "You have no cockades, you must put them on". We told them we could not. It was a distinguish badge we could not make use of. "But," said they, "it is required by law, to prevent distinctions, that people may not be abused, for their lives are in danger without them and there was always a large body of the lower classes about the Assembly that we had to pass through". We replied that we could not do it whatever might be the consequences, that we were willing to go as far as we could and if stopped we must submit to it. We saw that our friends were full of fear for our safty. We sat out with no small apprehension but we trusted in that power which can turn the hearts of men as a water course is turned.

We passed through the great concourse,

without interruption and reached the waiting room of the Assembly. A messenger informed the President of our arrival and we were immediately called to the bar.

John Marsillac read the petition with Brissot at his elbow to correct him in his emphasis, which he frequently did, unperceived I believe by all except ourselves.

At the close of every subject there was a general clapping of hands and the Officers endeavoring to hush them, This hushing I thought was hissing, from my ignorance of the language and apprehended all was going wrong until better informed. After the reading was concluded the President, Mirabeau, read his answer. The clapping was repeated at the end of every subject. At the close the President said, "The Assembly invites you to stay its sitting". As we were passing to the seats assigned to us a person touched Benjamin

and said "I am rejoiced to see something of your principals brought before this Assembly" He did not know who it was. After we were seated several members came to us for conversation on our principals. We remained until the Assembly rose and then retired to our lodgings.

We next found that a visits to the influential members at their private hotels was necessary to impress them with the reasonableness of our requests. We accordingly proceeded John Marsillac, Benjamin and myself and met with a polite reception from all except two and nothing more from them than a careless indifference. One was Leonard, a young man of good talents & great vanity. On our approach he offered us no seats and threw himself at great ease upon his sofa; which we were told was his usual custom when applicants of much more

consequence than we were came into his presence
The other was Tallyrand. After endeavouring
to impress him with the foundation of our
Petition he made no reply and let us pass
silently away.

We generally found a number of persons
with the members we visited, not of the
Assembly but applicants soliciting their favour
for the different objects they were pursuing
and the features of our petition always led
to an opportunity of opening our principals
at large, particularly that respecting War.

They invariable enquired and listened
with great attention and seldom was any
opposition expressed. We had much conver-
sation with Bishop Gregory, who was a very
Catholic man and liberal in his sentiments
and much esteemed - and also with Rabaut
De St. Etienne then Bishop of Autun. He
was a very valuable man and I believe a

blessing to many over whom he presided. He was one who fell a victim to the guillotine under the sanguinary reign of Robespierre He was inclined to converse much on non resistance and finally thus summed up what he considered the view of its Advocates and of pure Christianity

"If an assassin comes to take my life, and I conscientiously refrain from taking his, to save it, I may trust in some interposition for my deliverence. If however, no interposition appearing, I still refrain from precipitating a soul, unprepared, into Eternity and he is suffered to effect his object on me I may hope to find mercy for myself." The object of our petition was of little consequence to me compared with the opportunity we now had of somewhat spreading a knowledge of our principals above all that of the Inward Light or spirit of

God in every man as a primary rule of Faith and Practice. We met with a number of serious persons who were in a great measure convinced of the rectitude of our Faith, and they gathered about us at our hotel, one evening after another, one inviting others to come, until these social meetings in our apartments became exceedingly interesting. The conversation almost wholly turned on religious subjects and they always appeared well satisfied with the hours thus spent. It was then a turbulent time in Paris and much more so afterwards. Several of these valuable persons fell in the Reign of Terror and others are beyond my knowledge but the remembrance of those evenings and the feeling of Divine influence that attended them will I believe never pass away. One of our visitors informed us that the Duchess of Bourbon was much interested in the principals we

profess and said if we wished to see her he would make way for it, but Benjamins business calling him away home and I not speaking the French language, we could not accept the proffered interview. We therefore returned to Dunkirk.

In the course of 1792 fresh trials awaited us. A great insurrection took place in Dunkirk, founded on a rumour of an exportation of corn. Several houses were attacked, their furniture destroyed and the families, among whom were particular friends of ours, but just escaped with their lives. At last the military were called out in aid of the Civil Authority, and fifteen of the rioters were killed before they were quelled. The head of one of those families escaped in disguise and his wife and daughters were secretly conveyed to our house at midnight, from whence, before day break, a friend escorted them to the

Chateau of her father, sixty miles distant. Martial law was proclaimed and wherever five men were seen together in the street in the evening, or night, orders were given to fire upon them. It was indeed an awful time.

A great trial now awaited us which I had anticipated with serious apprehension. That of an Illumination for the Victories of the French over the Austrians.

The illumination was announced as for tomorrow evening. Having very little time to consider what could be done Benjamin and myself thought it best to go at once to the Mayor and Magistrates, then assembled, to inform them that we could not illuminate and the cause. "That as we could take no part in War we could not join in rejoicings for victory." On opening the subject they were much alarmed for our safety and asked what protection they could afford

us. We replied "That is no part of our business. We only wish to put our refusal on the right ground and remove any apprehension that we are opposing Government." "Well," said the Mayor, "Keep to your principals, your houses are your own. The streets are ours and we shall pursue such measures as we think proper to preserve the Peace of the town". We retired tho not without some fear that they would send an armed force. Should this be the case and any life lost, in endeavouring to protect us, I thought it would be insupportable. However, they took another course and sent men to erect a frame before our house (and three other houses occupied by those of our denomination) and hung a dozen lamps upon it. The Mayor had also the great kindness to have a similar frame with lamps placed before his own house in addition to the usual full

illumination and he once, and the Magistrates several times, walked before our house to see that all was quiet for they were in great apprehension. The evening being fine and great numbers walking in the streets, they generally stopped to inquire, why this singular illumination. They were answered by a person placed there by the Mayor for this purpose. On his informing them that we were not opposed to Government but were Quakers they went on their way.

We had all withdrawn into a back parlor where we spent the evening and thus passed this trying hour unmolested.

A circumstance occurred in the afternoon previous which I believe in part contributed to our remaining quiet. My son was passing and observed a number of men conversing very earnestly. One said "If there are any Aristocrats who do not illuminate they wi

be destroyed" Benjamin then observed to him that he hoped that would not be a criterion to judge Aristocrats by, as he could not illuminate and gave his reasons. The man who had been so earnest then addressed him thus. "I am glad I know your reasons and I will do all in my power to prevent your being injured". Another of the company said Mr Rotch that man can do more with those people you have most to fear than any man on this town;" and I have no doubt he used his influence with those very people. Thus we may frequently see a concurrence of circumstances in our preservation by many attributed to chance. I believe it is rather the watchful care of our Heavenly Father; undeserving tho we may be

Another illumination took place soon after when the same course was pursued by the Mayor. A young man was passing

our house in the evening late, when many of the lamps were extinguished and saw two men searching on the ground. On enquiry what they were seeking they said, "We are looking for something to demolish these windows. They are Aristocrats and do not illuminate." He told them they must not molest us, as we were no Aristocrats but Quakers, whose religious principals forbade public rejoicings on any occasion. And he pursuaded them away. Of this we were informed by the young man's father in the morning.

The next illumination was on the occasion of the arrival of the Commissioners from Paris to stir up the people to action, My son being absent I pursuaded Louis De Bacque to go with me to the Commissioners and as my Interpreter give my reasons for taking no part in it. We found them more

of the Forts and after Louis had communicated what I wished the principal among them came to me and taking me by the hand desired we would do nothing contrary to our scruples on their account. After some friendly conversation and kindly expressions he turned to a large body of people present and thus addressed them. "We are about establishing a government on the same principals that Wm Penn, the Quaker, established in Pennsylvania and I find there are a few Quakers in this town whose principals do not admit of public rejoicings. I desire they may not be molested". That same evening the Commissioners assembled the town at the Town House and addressed them on their public affairs and in the course of it again took up our case and as before, desired we might not be molested but protected. We afterward

found that several candles had been stuck upon some pillars on the outside of our house though we did not know it at the time. This must have been done by mechanics in our employ several of whom passed much of the evening in walking before our house to see if there was any service they could render and telling those who enquired that we were Quakers and not Aristocrats.

In the beginning of 1793 I became fully aware that War between England and France would soon take place therefore it was necessary for me to leave the country in order to save our vessels if they were captured by the English and I proceeded to England. Two of them were captured full of oil and condemned, but we recovered both by my being in England, where I arrived two weeks before war took place. My going to France to pursue the Whale

Fishery so disappointed Lord Hawkesbury that he undertook to be revenged on me for his own folly and I have no doubt gave directions to the Cruisers to take any of my vessels that they met going to France. When the Ospray was taken by a Kings ship, the officer sent on board to examine her papers said to the Captain "Youll take this vessel in Sir, She belongs to Mr Rotch" My wife and family embarked secretly from Dunkirk with many Americans in a ship bound to America, and were landed in England where I had the great comfort of receiving them four months after I left France. Louis XIV was guillotined two days after I left France an event solemnly anticipated and deeply deplored by many who dared not manifest what they felt.

We now settled in London where we en-

joyed the company of many old friends and acquaintances until the summer of 1794. My son William sent the ship Barcley to France with a cargo of oil, under David Swain Master, and thence ordered her to London to take us to America.

We embarked on the 24th of 7th month, had a long passage of Sixty One days and arrived in Boston on the 23d of 9th month 1794

We soon proceeded to New Bedford and after spending several days there returned to our home at Nantucket finding all our children and grandchildren well and Six added to Samuels and Williams families.

We staid a year at our old habitation and then removed to New Bedford where we have remained until now when I have entered on my Eightieth year.

Many occurences I omits in giving the foregoing account which would swell this

scrip to a considerable volume.

When I take a retrospective view of this portion of my life, of the dangers to which I have been exposed and the numerous privations I have witnessed, to be attributed to nothing but that Superintending Power, who is ever ready to succour the workmanship of his Holy hand, it fills me with astonishment and admiration, and seeing my own unworthiness I may exclaim with the Psalmist

"What is man that thou art mindful of him or the son of man that thou visitest him"

New Bedford 2d month 1814

Wm Rotch.

The respectful Petition
of the Christian Society of Friends called
Quakers
presented to the National Assembly of France.
by
William Rotch
2d Month 10th 1791

Respectable Legislators
The French Nation
having appointed you her Legislators and your
hearts having been disposed to enact wise
laws, we solicit the extension of your justice
and benevolence to the Society of peacable
Christians to which we belong.

You know that in several States of
Europe and North America there are a great
number of Christians known by the name of
Quakers who profess to serve God according
to the Ancient simplicity of the primitive
Christian Church

Several towns and villages of Languedoc contain a number of families attached to this primitive Christianity. Many other families which came from America have settled at Dunkirk under the auspices of the late government in consequence of the invitation given to the inhabitants of Nantucket for the purpose of extending the French fisheries. These Islanders have proved themselves worthy of your kindness by their success, and the same motives will induce them to continue to deserve it.

Concerns, however of far greater moment have this day brought us before you

In an age signal for the increase of knowledge you have been struck with this truth, that Conscience, the immediate relation of man with his creator cannot be subject to the power of man and this principal of justice hath induced you to decree a general liberty

for all forms of worship. This is one of the noblest decrees of the French Legislature. You have set a good example to the Nations which continue to persecute for religion and sooner or later we hope they will follow it.

We have come to implore this spirit of justice that we may be suffered without molestation to conform to some principals and to use some forms to which the great family of Friends called Quakers have been inviolably attached ever since their rise

Great persecutions have been inflicted upon us on account of one of those principals; but to no purpose. Providence has enabled us to surmount them without violence. We mean the principal which forbids us to take arms and kill man under any pretence; a principal consistant with the Holy Scriptures, "Render not" said Christ "evil for evil but do good to your enemies." Would to Heaven this principal were

universally adopted, all mankind becoming one family would be bretheren united by acts of kindness.

Generous Frenchmen you are convinced of this truth. You have already begun to reduce it to practice: you have decreed never to defile your hands with blood in pursuit of conquest. This measure brings you, it brings the whole world one step nearer to Universal peace. You cannot therefore behold with an unfriendly eye men who accelerate it by their example. They have proved in Pennsylvania that vast establishments may be formed, raised and supported without military force and without shedding human blood. We submit to your laws and only desire the privelege of being here as in other countries the Bretheren of all men never to take up arms against any. England and the United States of America, where our bretheren are far more numerous than in France allow

us peaceably to follow this great principal of our religion, nor do they esteem us useless members of the Community.

We have another request to make which we hope you will not refuse us because it flows from those principals of justice to which you do homage. In our registers of Births, Marriages, and Deaths we have preserved the simplicity of the primitive church. Our maxims forbid useless formes and limit us to those which are necessary for ascertaining the terms of human life consistently with the good order of society. We request that our simple registers may be deemed sufficient to legalize our marriages and births and authenticate our deaths, by causing a declaration to be made before a magistrate.

Finally we request that we may be exempted from all oaths Christ having expressly forbidden them in these words, "You have heard that it hath been said, by them of old time, perform thine oaths,

but I say unto you Swear not at all, but let your Yea be yea and your nay, nay" —

Wise Legislators you are pursuaded as ~~xxx~~ well as we that an Oath is no assurance of sincerity, that it can give no additional force to the declaration of an honest man and doeth not deter a perjurer. You admit that an oath is but a peculiar way of making a declaration, as it were a peculiar mode of speech, we hope therefore you will not refuse to hear us in ours. It is that of our common Master, that of Christ. We trust that we shall not be suspected of a wish to evade the great purpose of a Civic Oath.

We are earnest to declare in this place that we will continue true to the constitution which you have formed, we will cherish and respect it and it is our full purpose to follow the laws in all their purity. On the other hand if our words, if our evidences, are found to be

false, we willingly submit to the penalties on false witnesses, & perjurers.

Can you Respectable Legislators hesitate to grant our requests? Cast your eyes on the history of our Society in the countries in which we are established. More than a century hath elapsed and we have never been found in any conspiracy against the Government. Our temperate rule of life forbids ambition and luxury and the purpose of our watchful Discipline is to preserve us in the practice of those manners to which we were led by the exhortations and example of our founder. We esteem employment a duty enjoined on all and this persuasion renders us active and industrious. In this respect therefore our Society may prove useful to France. By encouraging us you encourage Industry. Industry seeks those countries where the honest, industrious man will be under no apprehension of seeing the produce of a Century of labour snatched

away in an instant by the hand of persecution. Now that France is becoming the assylum of liberty, of equal law and brotherly kindness, and adds to these sources of prosperity, perfect liberty for every individual to obey the dictates of his conscience in relation to the Almighty - what prospects of advantage will arise to influence our bretheren, who inhabit less happy climes, to settle in France a country favoured by nature, as soon as they learn that you have granted them the same Civil and religious liberty which they enjoy in England and the United States of America.

Such is the respectful petition we present for the relief of our Bretheren in France and the good of a Country which we love. We hope among your important engagements in reforming this great Empire and multiplying its sources of happiness, you will extend your justice and regard to us and our children.

It will bring on you the reward of the Almighty and the love of virtuous men.

The above was translated into French and read by John Marsillac, a French gentleman who had become much attached to Wm Rotch, while Brissot stood by to aid him if he should require his assistance. At the conclusion of the reading. Mirabeau, President of the Assembly rose and thus replied

"Quakers, who have fled from Persecutors and Tyrants cannot but address with confidence the Legislators who have for the first time in France, made the rights of mankind the basis of Law; and France now reformed, France in the bosom of Peace, which she will always consider herself bound to revere and which she wishes to all other nations may become another happy Pennsylvania.

As a system of Philanthropy we admire

your principals, They remind us that the origin of every society was a family, united by its manners, its affections, and its wants and doubtless those would be the most sublime institutions which would renew the human race and bring them back this primative and virtuous original.

The examination of your principals no longer concerns us. We have decided on that point. There is a kind of property no man would put into the common stock; the emotions of his soul, the freedom of his thought. In this sacred domain man is placed in a Hierarchy far above the social state. As a citizen he must adopt a form of Government, but as a thinking being, the Universe is his Country.

"As principals of Religion your doctrines will not be the subject of our deliberations. The relation of every man to the Supreme Being is independent of all Political institutions.

Between God and the heart of man what Government would dare to interfere?

"As Civil maxims your claims must be submitted to the discussions of the Legislative body. We will examine whether the formes you observe in order to ascertain births and marriages be sufficient to authenticate those descents which the division of property independant of good manners renders indispensable.

"We will consider whether a declaration subject to the penalties against false witness and perjury be not in fact an Oath.

Worthy Citizens you have already taken that Civic Oath which every man deserving of freedom has thought a privelege rather than a duty You have not taken God to witness but you have appealed to your consciences; and is not a pure conscience a Heaven without a cloud? Is not that part of a man a ray of Divinity?

"You also say that one of your religious tenets

forbids you to take up arms, or to kill a man under any pretence whatever. It is certainly a noble philosophical principal which thus does a kind of homage to humanity, but consider well whether defence of yourselves and your equals be not also a religious duty. You would otherwise be overpowered by Tyrants. Since we have procured liberty for you and for ourselves why should you refuse to preserve it?

Had your bretheren in Pennsylvania been less remote from the Savages, would they have suffered their wives, their children, their parents, to be massacred rather than resist. And are not stupid Tyrants and ferocious Conqueror Savages?

The Assembly in its wisdom will consider all your requests, but whenever I meet a Quaker I will say. "My brother if thou hast a right to be free, thou hast the right to prevent any one from making thee a slave. As thou lovest a fellow creature, suffer not a Tyrant to destroy him, it

would be killing him thyself. Thou desirest Peace—but consider—weakness invites war, general resistance would prove an Universal Peace.

The Assembly invites you to stay its sittings. "Une députation des Quakers est admise à la barre; tous ses membres restent couverts"

Note In the North American Review 1822 there is an article on Mirabeau's speeches by Hon. Edward Everett. The speech above is there quoted. It varies in phraseology but is substantially the same. W.L.R.

N. B Mr. Everett probably found his material in the Moniteur of July 10th 1791.

Bulletin De L'Assembly National.

"Les applaudissemants nombreux et réitérés avaients souvent interrompu cette réponse; ils recommancent avec une nouvelle énergie"

"L'Assemblée ordonne l'impression des discours de la Deputation et du Presidents".

Note A Page 54 – Benj. Rotch was afterwards informed that the King participating in the prevailing curiosity to see his father was present incog. during this visit to the Royal Chapel.
Note B Page 8 – This was an error in date which should be 1778 Count D'Estaing with his fleet arrived off Newport Aug. 29 1778.

Another annecdote is told by Benjn. When Lord Hawkesbury sent a messenger to Wm Rotch, after all his arrangments were made for his departure to France, desiring another interview the answer returned was this. "If Lord Hawkesbury wishes to meet Wm Rotch he will find him on board the Ship Maria until the hour when the ship takes her anchor".

In 1796 the Duke de la Rochefoucault visited Wm Rotch in New Bedford. In his volume of "Travels" London 1799. page 493, he says, speaking of the Whale fishery, one of those inhabitants of Nantucket invited by M. De Colonne in 1786

to Dunkirk to introduce the Whale fishery into France, R. began the business of the whale fishery with 2 Ships in Dunkirk. In 1793 no less than 40 Ships sailed from D. for the Fishery.

"Copy of Thomas Jenkins's Complaint against Sundry persons.

To the Honorable Council and the Honorable House of Representatives in General Court Assembled at Boston State of Massachusetts Bay November 1779

Thomas Jenkins humbly sheweth -
That as a true and liege subject of the State of Massachusetts Bay, as well as from enormous personal injuries received, he is most strongly urged to lay the following representation and complaint before the supreme Legislature of the State.

Your petitioner complains of Dr Benjamin Tupper

Timothy Folger Esq, Wm Rotch, Samuel Starbuck, and Kezia Coffin all of the Island of Nantucket, as persons dangerous and inimical to the freedom and independence of this and the other United States of America, as encouragers, aiders and abettors of the Enemy, in making inroads on the state territories, and depredations on the property of the good subjects of this State.

It can be clearly proved, if your Honors should see fit to order an inquiry that reiterated attempts have been made by some of the above persons, to induce the inhabitants of the said Island, to settle correspondence with, and openly join the enemy

In particular, the said Timothy Folger applied to the Selectmen of the town of Sherbourn in a written request, subscribed with his own hand, to call a Convention of the Town in order to choose a Committee to treat with the British Commanders at New York and Rhode Island;

and also whether it was expedient for the Town any longer to pay taxes to this State, And upon the said application being reprobated by the Selectmen as highly prejudicial and inimical to the honor and interest of the State, said Folger declared that several of the principal inhabitants of the Town were of his opinion; and then insolently told the Selectmen, they deserved to be damned if they refused to comply with his proposal. this treasonable proposition will be proved by the Selectmen.

That there was a private correspondence carried on by some or all of the aforesaid persons with the Enemy can be proved by annexed the list of Witnesses, No 2. and that the Commander of the predatory fleet, which came to Nantucket last Spring, confessed that they never should have come there on the design they executed, had they not repeatedly been called and invited by the friends of the British Government in the infamous number of whom the persons above complained of were notoriously enrolled.

Dr. Samuel Gelston will prove this confession.

That upon the arrival of the renagado fleet at the bar of the harbor, the aforesaid Rotch and Folger, together with one Josiah Folger Barker (without any appointment or consent of the town) went on board the said fleet, and after tarrying some time came on shore with several of the principal refugee Officers and immediately went to the said Rotch's house where, after calling in three or four other men of the same inimical character with themselves, a long consultation was held. In about an hour the Counsil broke up, and one of the said Officers with a number of his people proceeded immediately to some warehouses of your Complainant and robbed him of 260 Bbls. of Sperm oil, 1800 lbs. of Whalebone, 2300 weights of iron, 1200 lbs. of Coffee, 20,000 weight of tobacco and a number of smaller articles, all which they carried off, together with a Brig one moiety of which he owned, to the loss of your Complainant, Twenty five hundred

guineas at least. This property was pointed out to them by Dr Tupper and Kezia Coffin.

That other effects of the true and liege subjects of this State were particularly pointed out to the Enemy for plunder, by some of the persons above complained of and especially by said Starbuck can be amply proved.

Your Complainant begs leave further to add, that after the Enemy had got possession of his Brig above mentioned, frightened by a false alarm, they precipitately left the harbor, and the said Brig behind them, with only five men on her; upon which some of the well disposed inhabitants proposed securing her, which might with ease have been effected. But the said Rotch and Folger with some others of the same complexion and sentiments interfered and dissuaded and opposed the intention of the people, by means of which the said Brig and cargo were finally carried off after a pilot was procured by the enemy who was induced to take charge of the vessel by the aforesaid William Rotch.

To put the inimical and treasonable designs and sentiments of the said Dr. Tupper beyond all dispute; after he had returned from New York, with said Starbuck and Rotch, where they had gone on an illegal and dangerous errand, upon a Town Meeting being convened said Tupper after having menaced and abused all those persons who had been opposed to the said Triumvirate going to New York, he moved that a Committee should be chosen for the purpose of seeing that the King's servants, meaning adherents & Officers of the British King, should receive suitable respect and protection and be kindly used, and that all refractory persons, (meaning such liege subjects of the State as were opposed to their traitorous proceedings) should be apprehended & sent where they would meet their punishment.

Innumerable other instances of the most dangerous and illegal conduct of some or all the persons now complained of can be produced should

your Honors see fit to order an inquiry to be made, which your Petitioner and Complainent ~~himself~~ humbly pray may be ordered, as well for the public interest, as that some reparation may be made him and his other suffering Bretheren who have sustained very heavy losses by the cruel & treasonable management of these people, and that such order may issue from your Honors as shall compel the persons charged as above to answer to these articles of complaints; and that summonses may be granted for the Witnesses, whose names are herewith handed to your Honors, to attend at such time as your Honors shall order the inquiry to be made. And your petitioner as in duty bound shall ever pray. (signed) Thomas Jenkins

A true copy

Attest John Avery D. Sy.

Witnesses to the several charges-

John Waterman	Shuball Barnard	Dr Saml. Gelston
Benj Folger	Peter Macy	Shuball Worth
Walter Folger	Ebeniza Coffin	Timothy Fitch (Medford)

Shuball Downs (Walpole)
Marshall Jenkins (Mr. Vin.yd)
Benj Hussey
Stephen Hussey
Seth Jenkins
Stephen Fish
Paul Pinkham
Wm Hammett
John Ramsdale
George Hussey 2d
Francis Chase

(Copy)

Slaves grown sugar &c Slavery

Extracts from letters of
Wm Rotch

Dear son Samuel Rodman   Dunkirk 1 mo 25th 1792

xxxxx I expect we shall be able to import wheat for our flour & brd for our next out-fit to advantage, but cannot now determine. Sugar and molasses are now at enormous prices, more on account of the devastation in the West Indies than the depreciation in the paper money; the same causes must operate in America. A little pamphlet lately published in Engd entitled

"An address to the people of G Britain on the propriety of abstaining from the use of W I sugar and Rum" (which I doubt not has ere now reached America) has had ~~so~~ powerful an effect on our family (servants excepted) if on the principals of humanity only, as to wholly renounce those luxuries (sugar of W. Indies). It is true the coffee & tea, apple-pies and puddings went down not quite so easy, but on my part with no reluctance, the object considered. We have just got 1 C of E India from London at the price of 115/4 pr Ct. a noble price surely, yet it sold next day at 148/. but we must take Cousin Calebs method in apples sugar must cost our family no more than usual. The subject of the Slave trade will be again brot befor Parliament with considerable additional advocates for its abolition, but I doubt its obtaining at this time, though I think the cup of iniquity must be near full, probably the longer it is permitted, the greater will be the vengeance be when it is poured out. I do sincerely wish it may be

prevented by a timely abstaining from so horrid a crime. The Sierra Leon establishment is going forward with a determind step to do what can be done, great expectations of facilitating the object by the grant made of 20 Sq miles by King Naimbanna & his disposition with that of one of his sons, (24 yrs. of age) whom he has sent to Engd. and placed under the care of Granville Sharp for his education) to abolish the inhuman trafic for men. At the conclusion of his letter to G. Sharp the King says. "My son, I hope you will take care of him and let him have his own way in nothing but what you think right yourself". I have not heard whether the embarkation of any has yet taken place. I would send thee the Report of the Court of Directors to the Sierra Leon Co. if it was not to bulky for the Post to Havre, but intend ordering one to thee from London by the Spring ships. It appears that this establishment has given some alarm

to the W I proprietors, who had laid a plan to render the whole abortive, which was an intention to purchase more than half the shares, but happily this combination was discovered before any part of it was put in execution, and measures adopted by the Compy for no proprietor to be admitted unless he were known to be a firm friends to the cause. These circumstances have occasioned a great number of families to relinquish their W. I sugar & some of all sugar Religion, humanity and inability from present exorbitant price; such are the exertions of so large a body of the Community, that I think the downfall of Slavery has already made a great march and must ere long give way on all sides. May this happy day break forth, through conviction in those so deeply dyed with the blood of those poor victims, rather than with the iron rod now in so many instances exercised by the oppressed over the oppresor in St. Domingo when such trage

scenes on all sides are exhibited as to make
nature revolt at the recital. I must now return
to business having digressed further than I intend-
ed, after adding that 3 or 4000 troops are sent from this
Kingdom to quell the insurrection which I be-
lieve will be of little use x x x

x We fully approve of the purchase of the Brig of
Sampson and the new hull for the materials
of the Sally as well as thy sending men after
live oak and red cedar. This needs no apology
among us as we all mean to act in our dis-
tant situations on one principal, that is the
general benefit. I wish every attention paid
to seasoning the timber of the new ship.
She will be large and costly. I have alread
desired that she may be set up with as much
timber as can be placed upon her and to stand
twelve months with out a plank upon her. The
streaks marked out upon the timbers and the
holes bored long before planking. This will be a

novelty but I know it can be done and the carpenter must be paid for it, as likewise for any loss upon the planks. Get 20 or 30000 feet more of out-board planks than the vessel will take which may prevent a loss in width. Giving opp'y for the timbers to season will also give more time to get the best of plank both oak & pine. I wish thee to get live oak transoms, apron &c as well as the top. x x x x x x x x x x x x x Thy accounts of the illness of Thomas' child was followed by letters from both Wm & Thos. giving an account of its dissolution. The account was affecting to us all but to me more from the agony it suffered than from its removal. I was glad both Thos & Charity were favored with so much fortitude and resignation in so trying circumstances. I intend writing them ere long

&c &c

Dr. Son Saml. Rodman Dunkirk 1 mo, 30th 1792.

x x x x x x As we want to purchase 2 Ships for Obed Fitch & O Paddock in lieu of the Maria and the Falkland

we shall need all our money from their two voyages and a part of the Hope's when she may arrive to answer that purpose together with the outfits of our six vessels viz Canton, New Ship of Bestu, 2 now to be purchased, Hope & Penelope, if they arrive safe, all which we are now making provision for. Thou must draw in Sterling if Anthony can not sell livres but they will be able to furnish thee in that line as I am very unwilling to draw Sterling, but let no person be put off when the time of payment arrives xxx I have written to Thomas & Wm countermanding the circulation of 50.000 livres least a change in currency may arise and make a loss rather than a profit. Whether the last 50.000 livres was on that plan or for thy use I do not rightly understand from their letter nor is it material which way it goes; if remitted in Stg it will turn to good account and if for thy use will be equally so xxxx I shall now direct them to draw the whole.

50,000 if needed for thy use but to omit purchasing the vessel for I think under the circumstances of St. Domingo vessels will be sold cheaper in this country than in America xxxxx I intended to have enlarged considerably on other matters not relative to business of which I am often wearied; but knowing communications of this kind are in our present state necessary I submit to it with a degree of cheerfulness. xxxxx What is most perplexing is to keep watch of the wretched paper money to avoid loss. I have reason to be glad of my invariable resolution to get what surplus of money we had into England as soon as I could until it reached 32[tt] we have now £6,000 there. I say I intended to have enlarged but was interrupted (not disagreeably) by a sensible, valuable young man from the Sec of Finance who is our frequent visitor who has left the religion he was educated in acknowledging to the truth in many respects and I hope will see through some things

that are now veiled. Being late in the evening I conclude with united love to you all.

Thy affectionate Father
Wm Rotch

P. S. 31st 8 in the morning

It is with satisfaction I may inform thee of the safe arival, in the Roads, of the Canton - all well.

Dear Son Saml Rodman Dunkirk 2 mo 11th 1792

xxxx I am glad thou hast sent and art sending us so much Beef say 130 Bbls pr Canton and 90 intended pr Osprey. This article must be attended to next fall if we are to continue the fishery. Pork as I before wrote to thee can be procured here to advantage, under the present state of the Asignats We have agreed for all we want for the 6 vessels @ 6 3/4 long in paper which is not more than 2 1/4 stg in real money. xxxxxxxxxx The oil pr Masfield came just right for us to make a good advantage in laying it out here & if there had been more it wld have been equally so, but let not this prompt

the to further speculations unless in Mexican oils that can be strained to advantage; as the crisis of the stands or falls of this Constitution is probably at hand therefore a time that requires caution. I do not wonder that the King's acceptance of the Constitution was attended with pleasing sensations Dym, it had the effect on us, but they were soon alloyed by the preparations for attack on this Kingdom by the Ex Princes, nobles & Clergy aided openly or secretly by almost all the powers of Europe, religion & civil liberty being poisonous to Despots. An attack I believe will be made in the Spring. Time will determine the event. The present encouragement in the Fishery from the advanced price in oil & bone which is really advantageous so far as the money can be appropriated to the produce of this Kingdom determines us to keep steadily on & keep all our interest insured in Eng. until an alteration in the Government more favorable. We have just

purchased a Ship at Havre for O Fitch of about 250 to 280 tons for 29.250 livres. She will cost at sea probably 45.000 (the vessel alone without outfits) She is good & sound, only 7 yrs old, built with fine timber at Havre. If she does not exceed 45.000 will be very cheap xxxx We are looking for another at the same place for O. Paddock. These two to replace the Maria & Falkland and use up assignats these last too bad to remit to London, We have now about 60.000 due for Bounty, the decree not yet passed but the money ready for payment. If the Hope should come in full I think with what we have added to that voyage would purchase these two ships and fit the whole 6 out completely and insure them xxxxxxxx If the Penelope comes in safe, perhaps her earnings may be appropriated to some speculations here to lay by. xxxxx If thou canst not be supplied by livres then thou must draw Stg for absolute necessity, but put no man off to whom we may owe money xxx &c &c &c

Riots
Dunkirk

Dear Son Samuel Rodman   Dunkirk 3 mo 2d 1792
My last was to the 18th & 20th Ulto via London since wh
have recd none from thee. As I know that after receiving
accots of the late Riots & distruction in part of several
houses &c in this place you will be anxious to know
our situation since that period; We have been en-
tirely quiet ever since; by the awe of a strong
Military force, and probably shall remain so as
long as the pretended cause ceases, that is, the ex-
portation of Corn, but as it is expected that will
again take place to supply the want of the South
it is apprehended it will again be made a pretext
for devastation & plunder. Revolutions from a state
of Despotism to Liberty generally I believe have the same
effects in all countries. When that liberty which
is the rights of man is obtained, it commonly is
much abused and degenerates for a time into
licensiousness, with its frequent production of a
levelling principal which often terminates in
plunder. Every thing around us wears a gloomy

aspect. Anarchy or war seem in the view of many the alternatives, both dreadful in their operations We have thus far been favoured to remain unmolested and hope we may be preserved with stability and fortitude suffecient for the day, but trials I apprehend will attend. The Canton will probably be ready to sail in 4 or 5 days. The "Penn" O Fitch at Havre going on as the unfavorable weather will admit. This Ship is a good purchase and I think complete for whaling as a ship she will not stand us in more than 45 or 47.000 livres a little more than £1000 Stg. Exchg being now 45#. Yesterday I received Acct of Sales from Homburg, Nt. pds 24601# 15 a good price by appropriating the money to the Penn, but very poor if to be remitted in Sterling Bills ××××××

Riots in Dunkirk. Funerals — Dunkirk 2d Mo 18th 1792

I wrote thee the 25th Ulto. by Capt Chapman from Havre to Boston 30th & 31st pr New York Packet 11th inst to go pr Mayfield 16th to go by Mayfield. By the 2d & 3d

thou wilt find the Cantons safe arrival, the last was only to inform thee of the arrival of David Starbuck from Coast of Peru with 550 Bbls Sp oil but brings no acc's so late as the Falkland, and also the great Riots that took place here on 3 Day last the 14th inst in which the front windows of 7 or 9 houses or 11 (the number I cannot yet ascertain) with the furniture and the property which fell in their way was destroyed. They had most of the day unmolested, but in the afternoon the armed force was called out by the Magistrates, the Red Flag displayed and martial law proclaimed under which the town still remains. Orders were given to fire on the mob whenever they were found and on any collection of people that had the least appearance of a mob. These orders were put in practise and some few have been killed and others wounded. About 500 foot & horse came into town next morning from the adjacent towns, so that a large armed force is now here which in the whole I apprehend does not amount to less

than 5000. Large patrols night and day have been kept up since and will probably be continued until the Masquerade time is over, which is forbidden by the Magistrates, but whether they will be very generally obeyed is yet undetermined. Tomorrow will be the usual time for its beginning. This affray took place first on some dealers in corn for exportation; wh was said to be prejudicial to the poor, but like all other such like assembleges, their first object was lost and pretence served their purpose. We have been very quiet since this affair took place. All the houses are ordered to be illuminated with which we with others readily comply although we cannot do it in times of public rejoicing. Thou mayst readily believe it has been a time of great trial, but through Divine Mercy we are yet preserved from suffering. We find many were to be victims of this fury; any distant affronts to any of the individuals was now suf-

ficient to mark their persons and property for destinction. Among others was our cousin Francis Macy who was threatened by a sailor, who had been with him some years ago, that his property should be destroyed before morning, but the magistrates perceiving it sent a guard to his house and all remained quiet. I little expected to be in the midst of another Revolution after that of America was completed, but here we are, and I am glad under every circumstance that we are here though what our sufferings may be is hid from our eyes. If things should continue in this agitated state & the Government too weak to prevent lawless intrusion I hope we shall have an opportunity to shift our quarters to some place of tranquility xxxxxxx. We have lately recd. from I. Anthony & Son a bill d 3 mos. on London for £1,975.13 Stg. for the 50,000 livres they sold which is accepted if we can pay the bill of 50,000 which will be due about the 2d of next month (including the customary days of Grace as they are called) before any change

in the currancy takes place it will be a noble speculation the livres are ready provided at Paris to pay it. I have alread wrote thee on this subject and that I had desired them (Anthonys) to draw no more on a circulating plan, least a change of Currency should lead to loss rather than profits x x x x x x would have thee omit further speculations for this market at present. What oil thou hast on hand send us we can make a considerable sum answer in our purchases in this country but no more remt.es to Engd. it being now here 42d.. So much as I am averse to a paper medium yet if we had a surplus of money would keep it in assignats rather than purchase Exchg at this high rate. I expect there will be great speculations in the paper of this Kingdm in England. Benjm recd intelligence last night from one person who proposed ordering him to purchase to the value of £20.000 Stg- and another 3,000 if he could advise them to the measure, they were sanguine in their own minds that

even a counter Revolution would still support the price of this paper. This Spring will I apprehend bring the public affairs of this Kingdom to a crisis. I ardently hope it will terminate in peace but fear it will be otherwise; I observe the demand of Fitch ++++++. I duly observe what thou mentions respecting the regulations of funerals &c which I have long wished for & am glad it is likely to be accomplished & reduced to Christian decorum. The two preparative meetings I must leave those to see the utility of, that can see as also the building another Meeting House. All that I can say on the subject is that I wish every addition or alteration made, that can conduce to the revival of truth among us. One thing I have been long convinced of and that is if the Meeting House could be moved to the lot of D. C's as once proposed it would be of real advantage in encouraging many to get out to Mg who are unable to reach it where it now stands, and would be a means of many others attending who might only make the

distance & the disagreeableness of passing the bleak hill in winter a pretext for their omission. As to my subscription; thy ideas are just as to my attachment being much weaned from the Island though a part of the Inhabitants I sincerely love and the mass I feel a regard for as a Christian duty and desire I may ever contribute to their welfare when in my power. These considerations do not appear sufficient to induce me to do so much as I once might have been willing to do; nevertheless when I am favoured to feel a little of the covering of that Universal love which reaches over sea and land to the whole human race I feel a willingness to contribute my mite in any manner, to nations kindred & people the world over for the promotion of the cause of righteousness in the earth. Under this consideration I am willing to subscribe one hundred pounds toward the moving the old Mg. house and building the new if concluded on, provided a sum sufficient

for both is subscribed for before either is undertaken. If not enough for both is subscribed, I desire my money may be wholly confined to the removal of the Old house, but under the express condition that the money for fully effecting it shall be provided before it is undertaken so as not to saddle the meeting with any debt, nor yet to apply to the Quarterly mg. for any pecuniary assistance xxxx I am much pleased to hear that thou and Cousin Wm are again on a friendly footing. It has heretofore been affecting to my mind, but I could not point out a remedy that I thot would fully answer the objects xxxxx pages on business xxxx -20th- All quiet save in a few instances of little consequence. We find in the whole about 16 of the mob killed and a considerable number wounded. A strong armed force deters them. I have already mentioned that I was sorry thou hadst brought or proposed to bring my encroaching neighbour under the notice of our tribunal; not because there

is not cause for an enquiry, but I much dislike any interesting matter of mine should command the interposition of Society therefore I wish thee to let the matter subside for the present. I intend writing to him, open under cover to thee when I can get time. The late confusion has prevented my writing on several subjects wh. must now be postponed to more tranquil times. It is now evening and all is quiet. The order against masquerading has been almost universally obey'd; a few persons who have been minded to insult the law in that respect have been safely conducted to prison, where also about 70 of the late Rioters are confined, by which it appears authority is restoring. I am with endeared love to thyself and dear Eliza to whom I wish I could now write in answer to her acceptable letter per Canton

Thy Affectionate father Wm Rotch.

Dear Son S. Rodman Dunkirk 3 mo 13th 1792

I wrote thee on the 10th inst. to go by Masfield from Havre, in which I mentioned that I had written to Timothy Folger fully on his & O. Husseys Kennebec affairs. I now enclose the copy of that letter ×××× I wish thou wouldst convey my sentiments to Molly Hussey as thou thinkest proper but to her alone, I wish full and impartial justice to be done her as far as in my power, though we are not to give up our own property in the case ××××. We remain quiet since the late Riots & I hope to continue so as its probable no more corn will be shipd from this quarter. A report circulated yesterday that the Emperor of Germany is dead (very suddenly) but no confirmation of it. If it is so it may make a great alteration in the Politicks of Europe at this critical juncture, but whether favourable or otherwise to the French Constitution is a question of great uncertainty. Exchange 42d Whale oil would fetch 40s & Bone 40. Anthonys bill 50.000# on our accounts is paid ××× The Emperor is dead, supposed p—d.

The Canton is waiting for a wind. We are all well as are our Nantucket friends generally -

I am &c

Dear Son Samuel Rodman Dunkirk 4 mo 3d 1792

My last to thee was 19th ulto with advice of arrival of the Penelope full of Sperm oil about or near 150 tuns which is nearly all out in fine order. I now the pleasure to make the satisfactory addition that at 7 last evening the Hope entered our harbour, safe, & full of whale oil including 80 Bbd Sperm perhaps 150 tuns and all well x x x x x x The Ospray does not yet appear. If she arrives safe we shall probably sell her as we have bought a fine ship for O. Paddock of about 290 tuns for wh. we gave £1700 Stg or 64600 livres as the Exchg that day was 38, It is a high price but she is worth it. This accommodates us in every way & does not increase the number the Maria being rotten and the Falkland so small that we cannot make use of her, Pray write mind to J Parsons.

and order 50000 good Hhd Staves (white oak) to be shipped
to Bedford to be ready for such conveyance as may
drop in. We shall want 100 M and some Bbl. staves
Provide also 20 or 30000 boat boards and lay by as
soon as may be. Procure at once 50 or 100 Reams of
Blue packing Candle paper, Pray procure a part
if cant the whole and ship pr first opportunity
Please tell Thad Swain, all we can say at present
is that the Fishery is better now than it has been
but whether it will be peace or war is very uncer-
tain, therefore he must act his own judgments
as to a Removal. Spm oil we expect will fetch
3 livres Exchange fluctuating 48 it was 2 days past
d 38 - great stock jobbing on the paper of this Kingdom
We shall insure all our vessels until a prospect
of Peace. We have now the acceptable company of
our friends Deborah Townsend of London and
Mercey Ranson of Hitchen both valuable friends
in the ministry; thus it is an encouragment in
our seperated state to find that we are not forgotten

by the Great Master. May those favours impress our minds with renewed annimation to press forward through every impediment. We also expect two more after the Yearly Mg. Deborah Darby one of the conspicuous stars in this Hemisphere and with her Rebecca Young who I believe is also valuable. Please inform sister Sarah that our dear C. Phillips is again fully restored to her former brightness as to the spiritual part to the great joy & comfort of her numerous friends. She has lately written an excellent letter to magistrates, Proprietors of mines and miners in Cornwall wh. I intend forwarding as soon as I can. Her body is much chained down so that she cannot get out, but what matters it so long as the inner man is perfectly alive. I have not time to add except our united anabating love to you all as if named

I am thy affectionate father.

W. B. CLARKE CO.
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Park St. Church, Boston.